Multi-Cultural Umbrella

How do you see differentiation in your classroom?

*How would I collect this data and categorize it?*

There are many ways to collect data on differentiation in relation to multi-culturalism in the classroom. Teacher and student surveys asking generalized questions to get a base set of data would be a start, followed up by more specific questioning and classroom observations with specific quantifiable data that can be compiled. I would categorize this data into generalized topics such as classroom environment, school culture, school climate, student engagement, school policy, family and community, Instructional strategies, acknowledgements, and curriculum.

*What trends do you see here and what are your take-aways?*

The largest trends in the data collected are Home language(27), Socio-economic status(22). Secondary indicators include Religion(17), Ethnicity(13), Cultural differences/backgrounds(13), and Family(13). Tertiary indicators include traditions(9), Interests/individuality(8), Nationality(7), Race(7), and appropriate materials used in class(7).

Obviously the two largest trends are huge issues in the inner city schools of Chicago, especially with the influx of Mexican immigrants to the city in the past decade. Many of these families speak exclusively English; the children being first generation walk into a school system based on the English language and therefore encounter many hurdles, especially on standardized tests. When considering English language learners in the classroom teachers must open their toolbox of instructional strategies to teach these students. Visual and non-verbal instructional strategies play a big part in communicating and educating these students. Socio-economic status is also a massive problem in Chicago Public Schools hosting a large population of impoverish families and their children. Problems and stresses at home can impact student behavior and learning at an exorbitant level, and cause challenges for instruction, classroom management, and social atmosphere. A secondary trend that surprised me was religion, which is not incredibly diverse at my school, but issues which must be considered when developing curriculum and instruction, especially religions that limit student’s interactions with certain content or experiences.

*Where are the outliers – and should they be ignored?*

Some outliers I would consider in this report are holistic medicine, classical education, teach pre-Columbus history, but even with this stated, outliers in regards to differentiation cannot exist if there is even a slight impact on the students lives. Everything must be considered, but data is collected to find the trends and focus attention on those areas to improve education and promote equity in the classroom.

*If you had to report this out, what would your report say and what did you learn from this?*

My report would focus on the two largest trends, massive issues in education today: Home language and socio-economic status. These are in fact major questions being asked today, they are targeted with interventions and programs with I feel little improvement. Embracing language by promoting multi-lingual schools and having standardized tests in students home language would be policies headed in the right direction I believe. I learned that in the end many ideas can come out of gathering information’s and compiling data, no matter how insignificant, when it comes to education. Teachers can improve their instruction just by being exposed to other teacher’s perceptions and experiences in the classroom. Multi-culturalism plays a huge role in today’s schools, especially in regards to equity in education today. Are ALL students getting a fair and equitable educational experience? Are they ALL getting the same benefits?